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C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 001026

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF AND NEA  
LONDON/PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/13/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI AND DEMARCHE REQUEST ON IRAQI CONSTITUTION

REF: STATE 188987

Classified By: AMBASSADOR MARGUERITA D. RAGSDALE.  
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) Ambassador conveyed reftel demarche October 13 to Minister of Foreign Affairs Mahmoud Ali Yousuf. She noted terms of the compromise by political leaders, as announced October 12, their endorsement by key Sunni elements, and the U.S. desire to build on the momentum generated by the compromise and endorsement in order to increase chances of success of the October 15 referendum. She asked the Foreign Minister that Djibouti consider any of several options to assist U.S. efforts, including (1) a public statement welcoming the compromise, congratulating parties involved, and urging Iraqis to vote in the referendum; (2) seeking support of the political process from Djibouti's Iraqi contacts; (3) making public statements on steps Djibouti would take on the diplomatic, political and economic front with Iraq; and (4) ceasing contacts, if any, with elements urging non-participation in the Iraqi political process.

12. (C) Yousuf responded that Djibouti is following events in Iraq and views the compromise as in line with its own thinking. Djibouti is optimistic, he said, that the amendment would help all parties. He expressed hope the Sunnis would accept. Yousuf advised the Ambassador that he would accept her first option -- a public statement -- and immediately gave instructions to the Director of Bilateral Affairs, Mohamed Ali Hassan, to draft a statement of Djibouti's support, to be released either that day (the 13th) or the 15th. The second and fourth options were not possible, Yousuf continued, as Djibouti has no contacts with either Iraqis supporting the political process or in opposition to it. With respect to the third option, he said Djibouti would be on board with whatever steps the Arab League decided to take. He admitted that the Arab League has stood somewhat back from the process in Iraq to date, but opined that this new compromise will likely lead to greater Arab League engagement.

13. (C) Yousuf also made the point that it will be important in Iraq, as the country moves along the road to democracy, to see stability and peace brought about. In many ways, he stated, stability, peace, and also security, must come before democracy and the political process. It is troubling, he continued, that so many Iraqi civilians are being killed in insurgency violence now underway in Iraq. With so much danger confronting ordinary civilians, getting widespread civilian participation in the process of government will be a far more difficult task.

RAGSDALE